

THE LOTOS EATERS

by

Alfred Lord Tennyson.

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1901



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THE LOGOS PAPERS.

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The LozOS Gaters

by ALFRED
LORD Tennyson

with designs by T.R.R.P.



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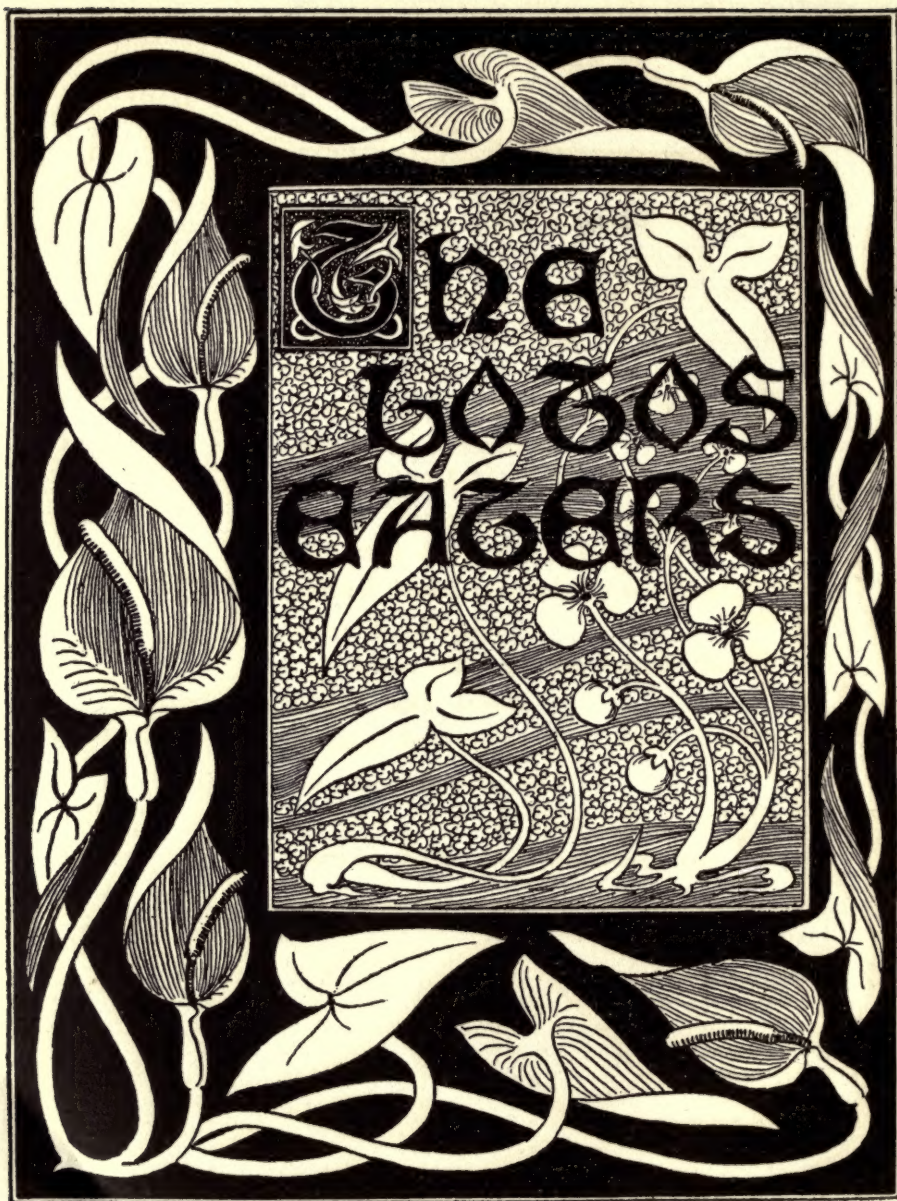
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ourage!" he said, and
pointed toward the land,
This mounting wave
will roll us shore-
ward soon?

In the afternoon they came
unto a land

In which it seemed always afternoon.

All round the coast the
languid air did swoon,

Breathing like one that hath a
weary dream.

Full-faced above the valley
stood the moon;

And like a downward smoke,
the slender stream

Along the cliff to fall and
pause and fall did seem.







land of streams! some,
like a down-ward smoke,
Slow-dropping veils
of thinnest lawn, did go;
And some thro' wavering lights
and shadows broke,
Rolling a slumbrous sheet of
foam below.
They saw the gleaming river
seaward flow
From the inner land: far off,
three mountain-tops,
Three silent pinnacles of
aged snow,
Stood sun-flush'd: and dew'd
with showery drops,
Ap-clomb the shadowy pine
above the woven copse.



he charmed sunset
tinger'd low adown
In the red West: thro'
mountain clefts the dale
Was seen far inland, and the
yellow down
Border'd with palm, and many
a winding vale
And meadow, set with slender
gatingale;
A land where all things always
seem'd the same!
And round about the heel
with faces pale,
Dark faces pale against that
rosy flame,
The mild-eyed melancholy
Lotus-eaters came.



Branches they bore of
that enchanted stem,
Laden with flower and
fruit, whereof they gave
To each, but whoso did receive
of them,
And taste, to him the gushing
of the wave
Far far away did seem to
mourn and rave
On alien shores; and if his
fellow spake,
His voice was thin, as voices
from the grave;
And deep-asleep he seem'd yet
all awake,
And music in his ears his
beating heart did make.



They sat them down
upon the yellow sand,
Between the sun
and moon upon the shore;
And sweet it was to dream of
Fatherland,
Of child, and wife, and slave;
but evermore
Most weary seem'd the sea,
weary the oar,
weary the wandering fields
of barren foam.
Then some one said, 'We
will return no more;
And all at once they sang, 'Our
island home
Is far beyond the wave; we
will no longer roam.'







^{1.}
here is sweet music here
that softer falls

Than petals of blown
roses on the grass,

O'night-dews on still waters
between walls

O' shadowy granite, in a gleaming
pass;

Music that gentlier on the spirit lies

Than bird eyelids upon bird eyes;

Music that brings sweet sleep down
from the blissful skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,

And thro' the moss the wies creep,

And in the stream the

long-leaved flowers weep

And from the craggy ledge the
poppy hangs in sleep.





^{11.}
Why are we weighed upon
with heaviness,
And utterly consumed
with sharp distress,
When all things else have rest
from weariness?
All things have rest: why should
we toil alone,
We only toil, who are the first
of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown,
Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's
holy balm;
Nor hearken what the inner spirit sings.

There is no joy but calm!
Why should we only toil, the
roof and crown of things?

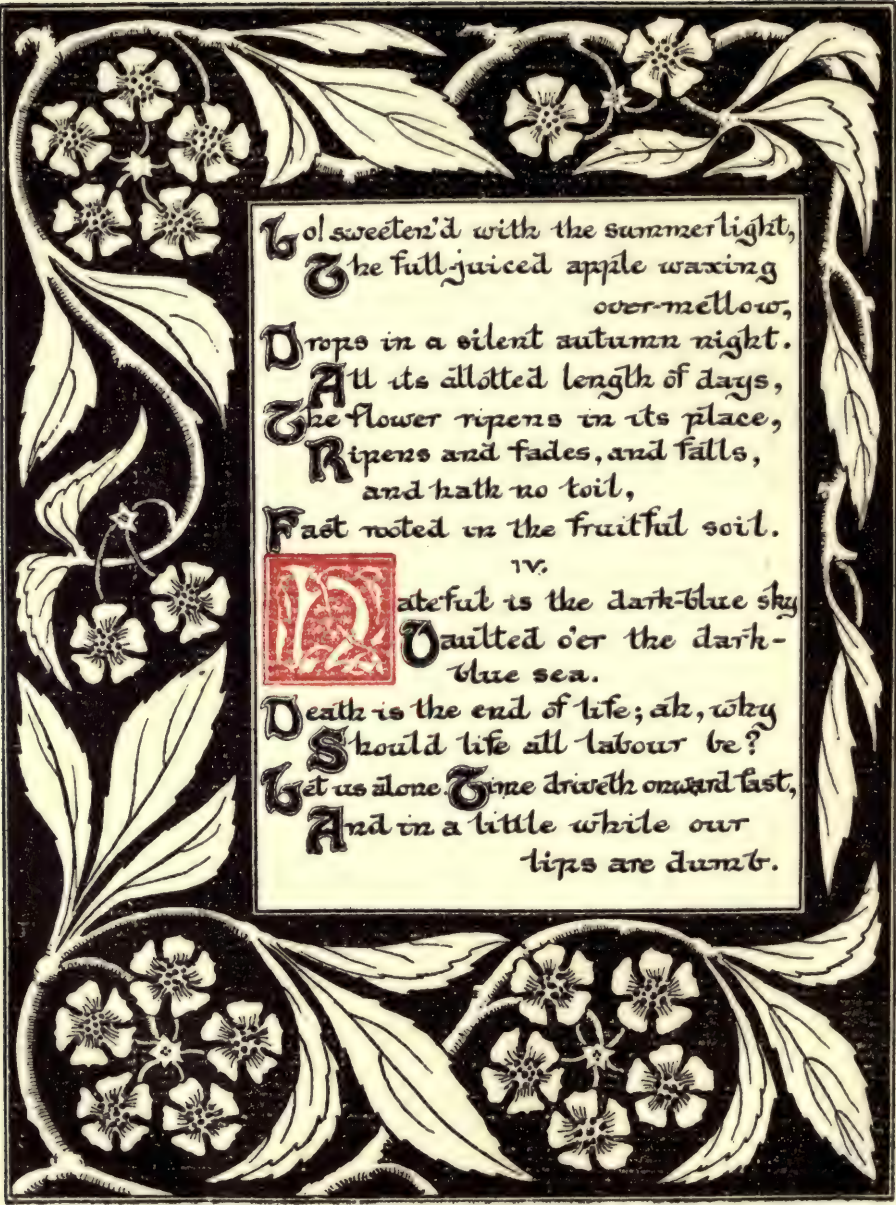
111.



Lo! in the middle of the
wood,
The folded leaf is woo'd
from out the bud
With winds upon the branch,
and there
Grows green and broad, and
takes no care,
Sun-steep'd at noon, and in
the moon
Rightly dew-fed; and turning
yellow
Falls and floats adown the air.





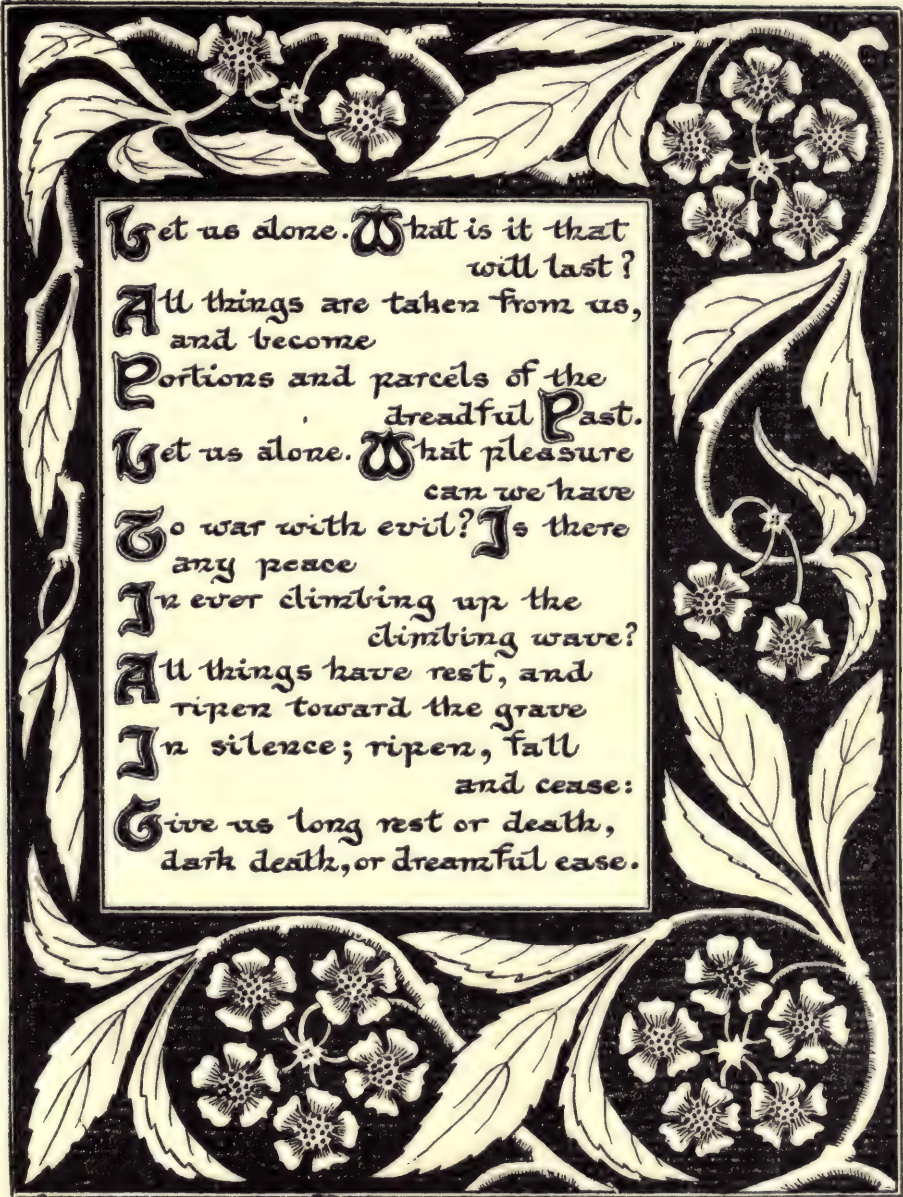


Bol sweeten'd with the summer light,
The full-juiced apple waxing
over-mellow,
Drops in a silent autumn night.
All its allotted length of days,
The flower ripens in its place,
Ripens and fades, and falls,
and hath no toil,
Fast rooted in the fruitful soil.

IV.

Mateful is the dark-blue sky
Vaunted o'er the dark-
blue sea.

Death is the end of life; ah, why
Should life all labour be?
Bet us alone **T**ime driveth onward fast,
And in a little while our
lips are dumb.



Let us alone. What is it that
will last?

All things are taken from us,
and become

Portions and parcels of the
dreadful Past.

Let us alone. What pleasure
can we have

To war with evil? Is there
any peace

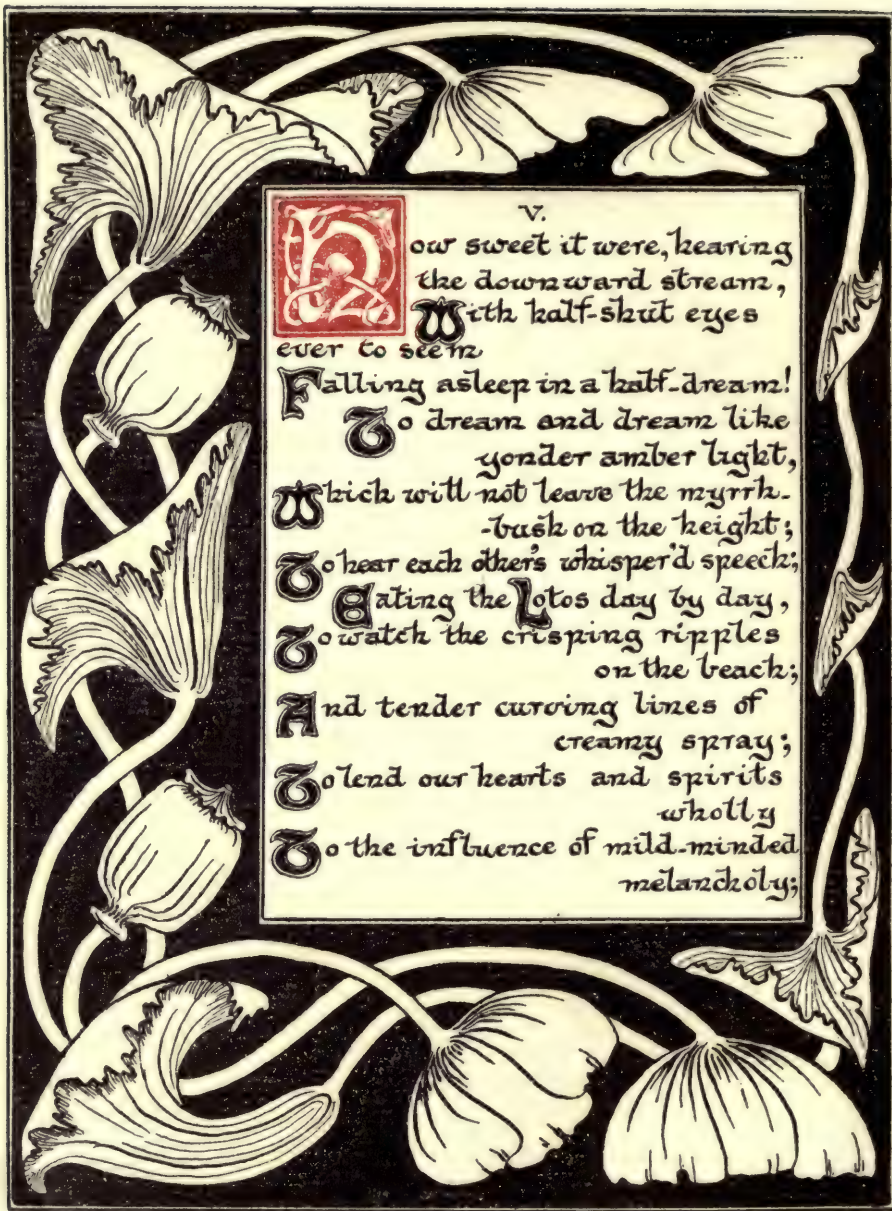
In ever climbing up the
climbing wave?

All things have rest, and
ripen toward the grave

In silence; ripen, fall
and cease:

Give us long rest or death,
dark death, or dreamful ease.





V.

Wow sweet it were, hearing
the downward stream,
With half-shut eyes
ever to seem

Falling asleep in a half-dream!

To dream and dream like
yonder amber light,

Which will not leave the myrrh-
-bush on the height;

To hear each other's whisper'd speech;

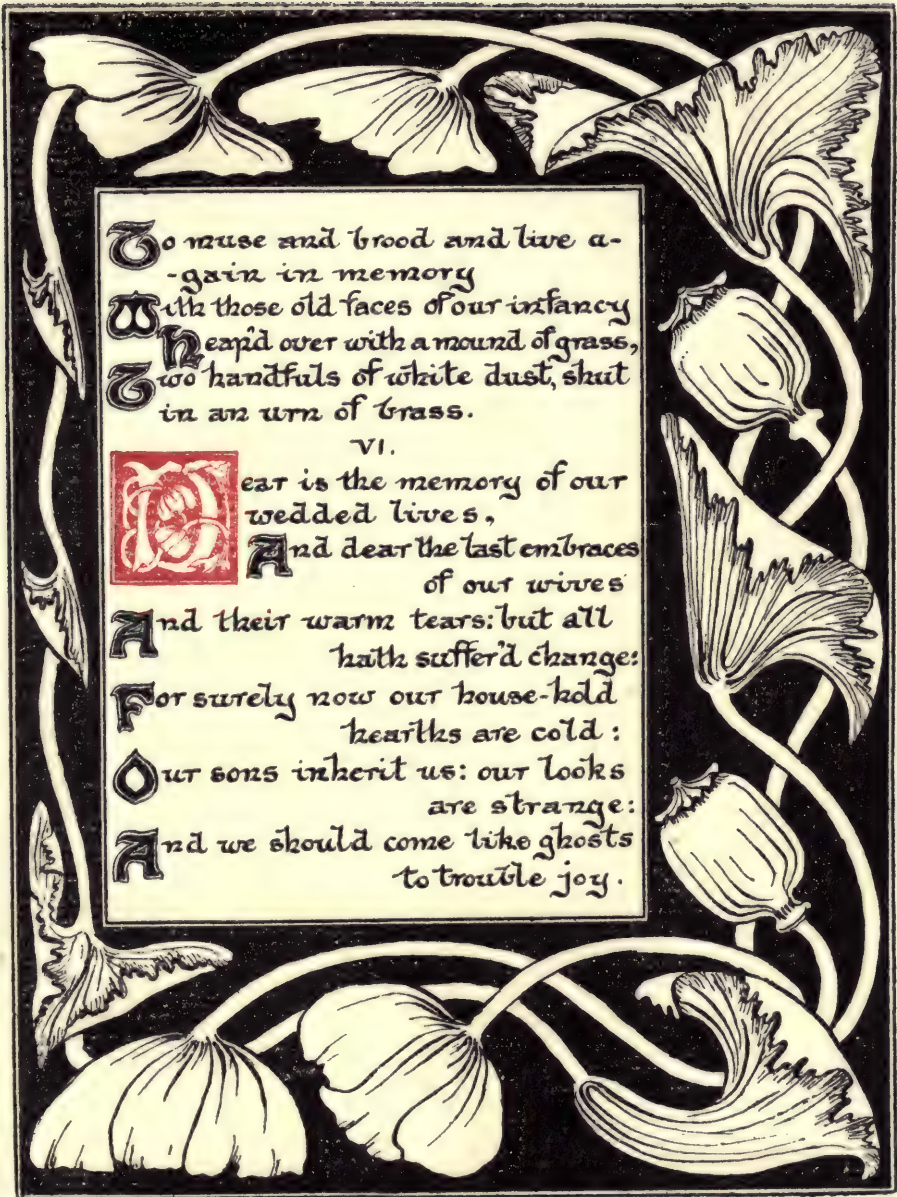
Eating the lotos day by day,

To watch the crisping ripples
on the beach;

And tender curving lines of
creamy spray;

To lend our hearts and spirits
wholly

To the influence of mild-minded
melancholy;



To muse and brood and live a-
-gain in memory
With those old faces of our infancy
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut
in an urn of brass.

VI.



Dear is the memory of our
wedded lives,

And dear the last embraces
of our wives

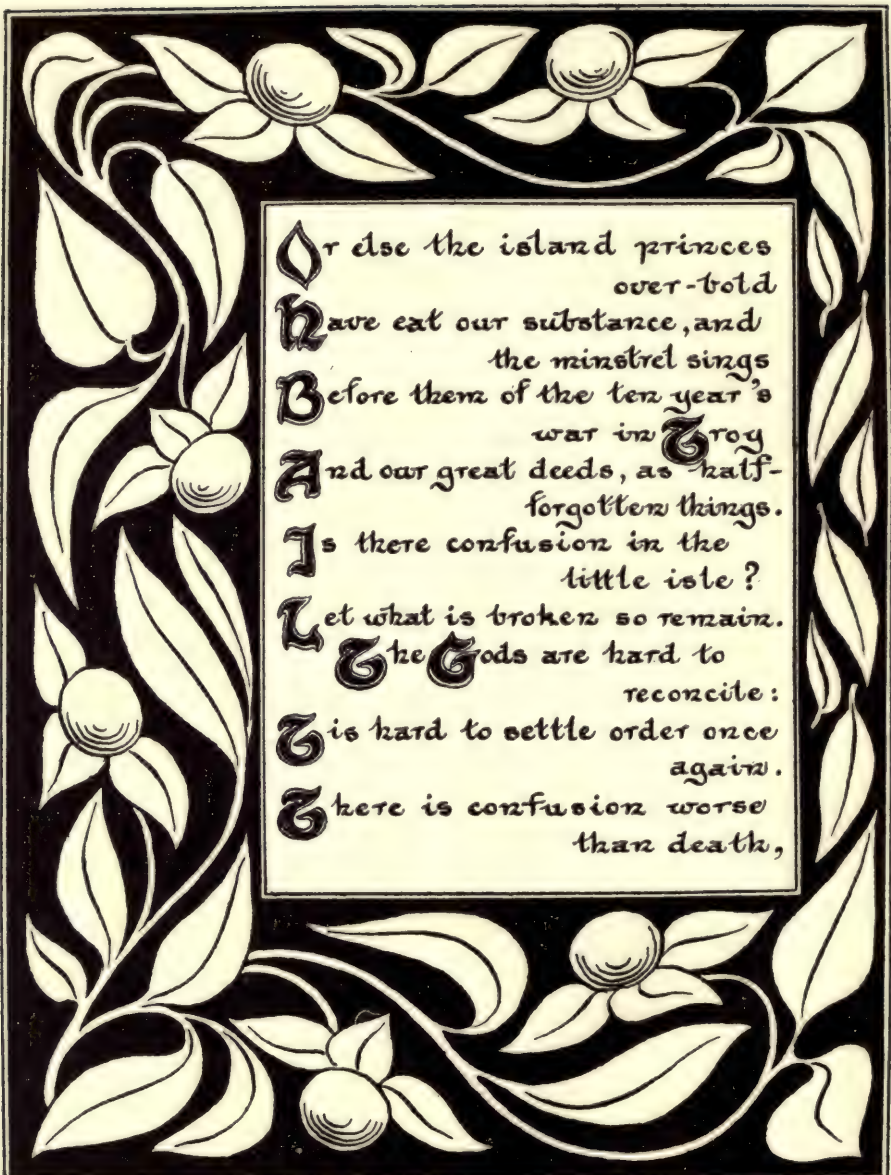
And their warm tears: but all
hath suffer'd change:

For surely now our house-hold
heartks are cold:

Our sons inherit us: our looks
are strange:

And we should come like ghosts
to trouble joy.





Or else the island princes
over-bold
Have eat our substance, and
the minstrel sings
Before them of the ten year's
war in **T**roy
And our great deeds, as half-
forgotten things.
Is there confusion in the
little isle?
Let what is broken so remain.
The **G**ods are hard to
reconcile:
Is hard to settle order once
again.
There is confusion worse
than death,

Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
Long labour unto aged breath,
Sore task to hearts worn out
by many wars
And eyes grown dim with
gazing on the pilot-stars.

VII.

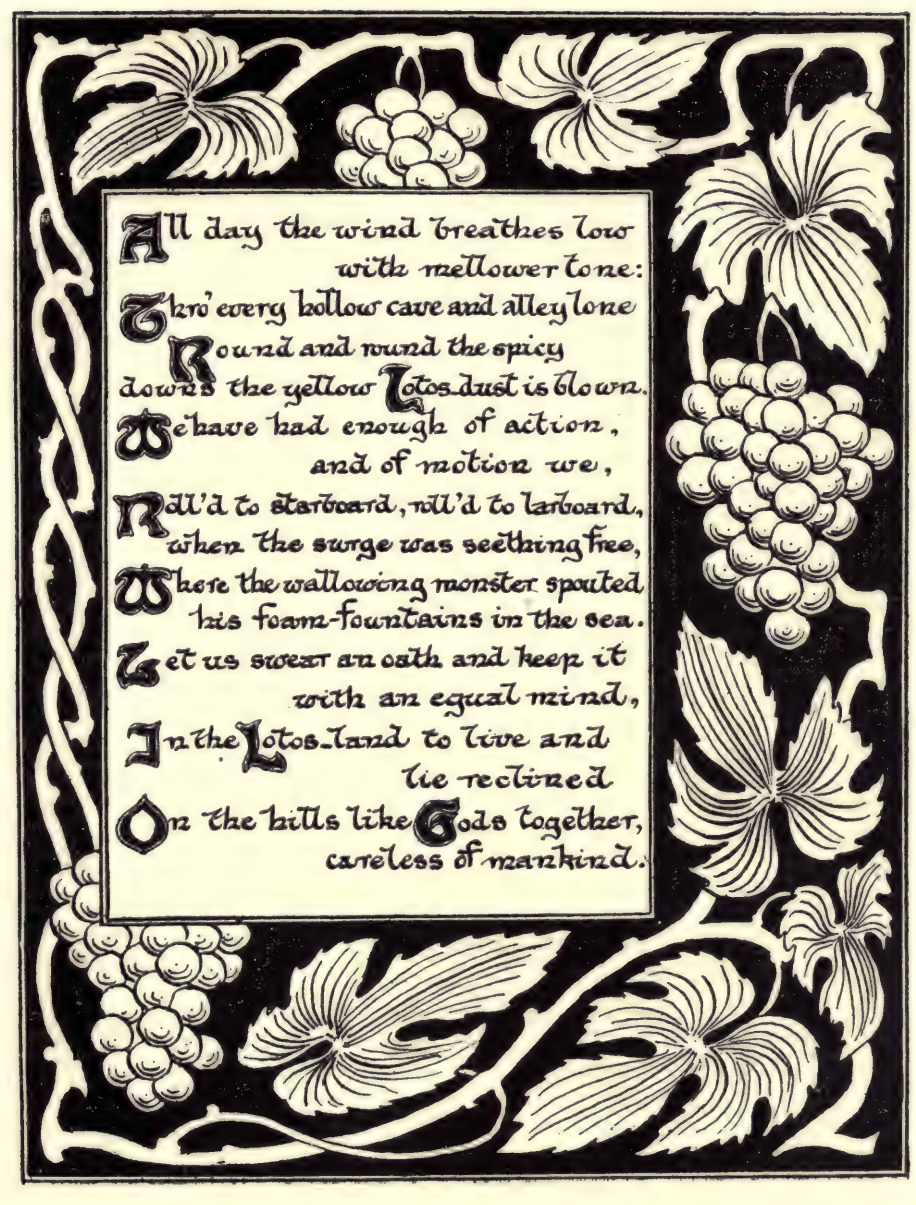


ut, propt on beds of
amaranth and moly,
How sweet (while
warm airs lull us, blowing lowly)
With half-dropt eye-lid still,
Beneath a heaven dark
and holy,
To watch the long bright
river drawing slowly
His waters from the purple hill.

To hear the dewy echoes
 calling
From cave to cave thro' the
 thick-twined vine—
To watch the emerald colour'd
 water falling
Thro' many a wov'n acanthus
 wreath divine!
Only to hear and see the far-
 off sparkling brine,
Only to hear were sweet stretch'd
 out beneath the pine.

VIII.

he Lotus Glows below
the barren peak:
he Lotus Glows by
every winding creek:



All day the wind breathes low
with mellow tone:

Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spicy
downd the yellow **L**otos dust is blown.

We have had enough of action,
and of motion we,

Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard,
when the surge was seething free,

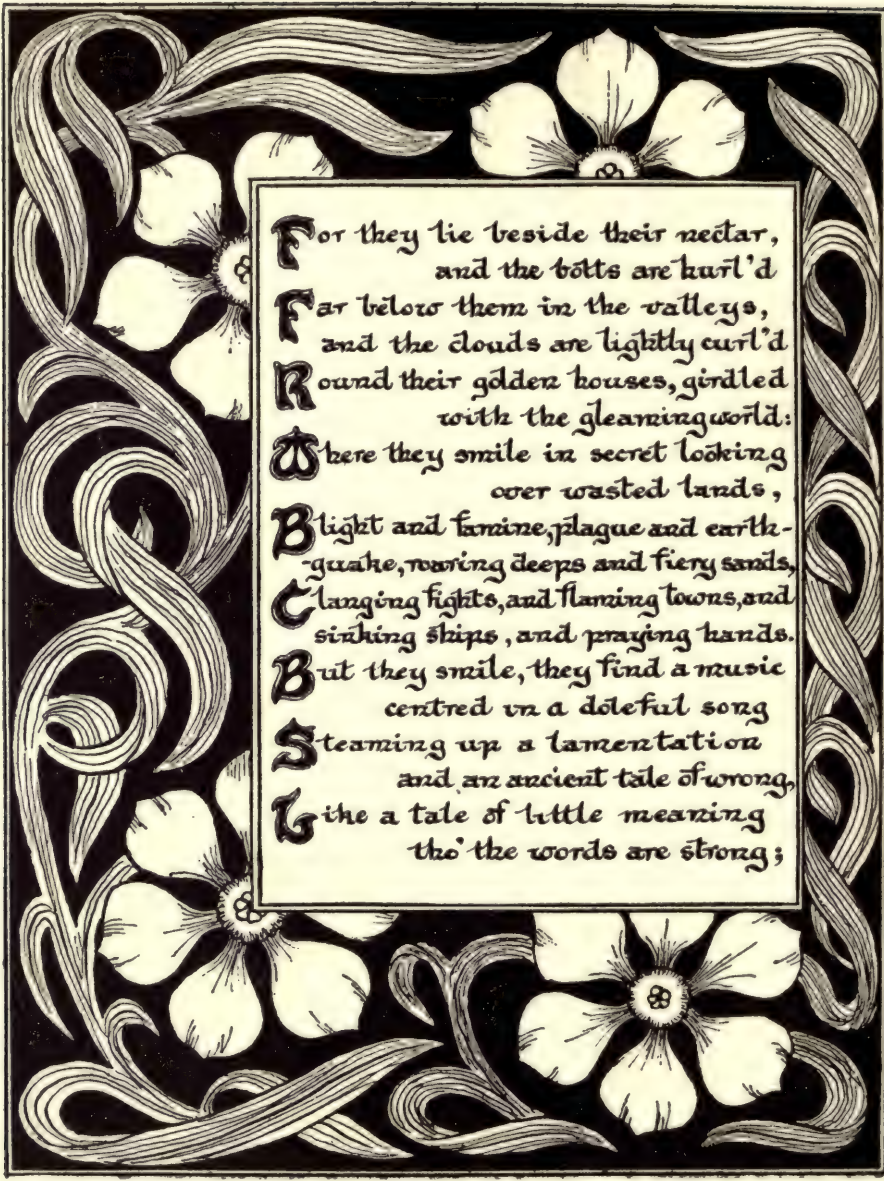
Where the wallowing monster spouted
his foam-fountains in the sea.

Let us swear an oath and keep it
with an equal mind,

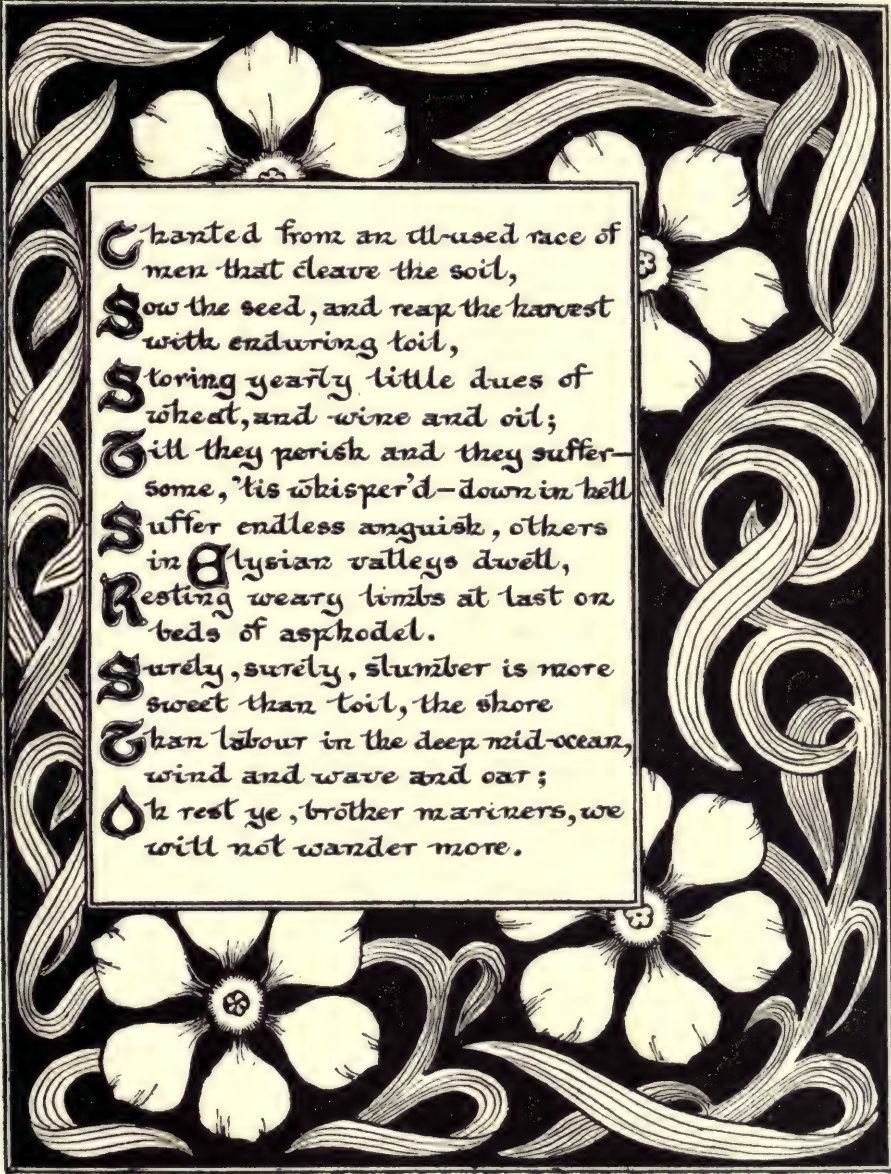
In the **L**otos-land to live and
lie reclined

On the hills like **G**ods together,
careless of mankind.





For they lie beside their nectar,
and the botts are kurl'd
Far below them in the valleys,
and the clouds are lightly curl'd
Round their golden houses, girdled
with the gleaming world:
Where they smile in secret looking
over wasted lands,
Blight and famine, plague and earth-
quake, roaring deeps and fiery sands,
Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and
sinking ships, and praying hands.
But they smile, they find a music
centred in a doleful song
Steaming up a lamentation
and an ancient tale of wrong,
Like a tale of little meaning
tho' the words are strong;

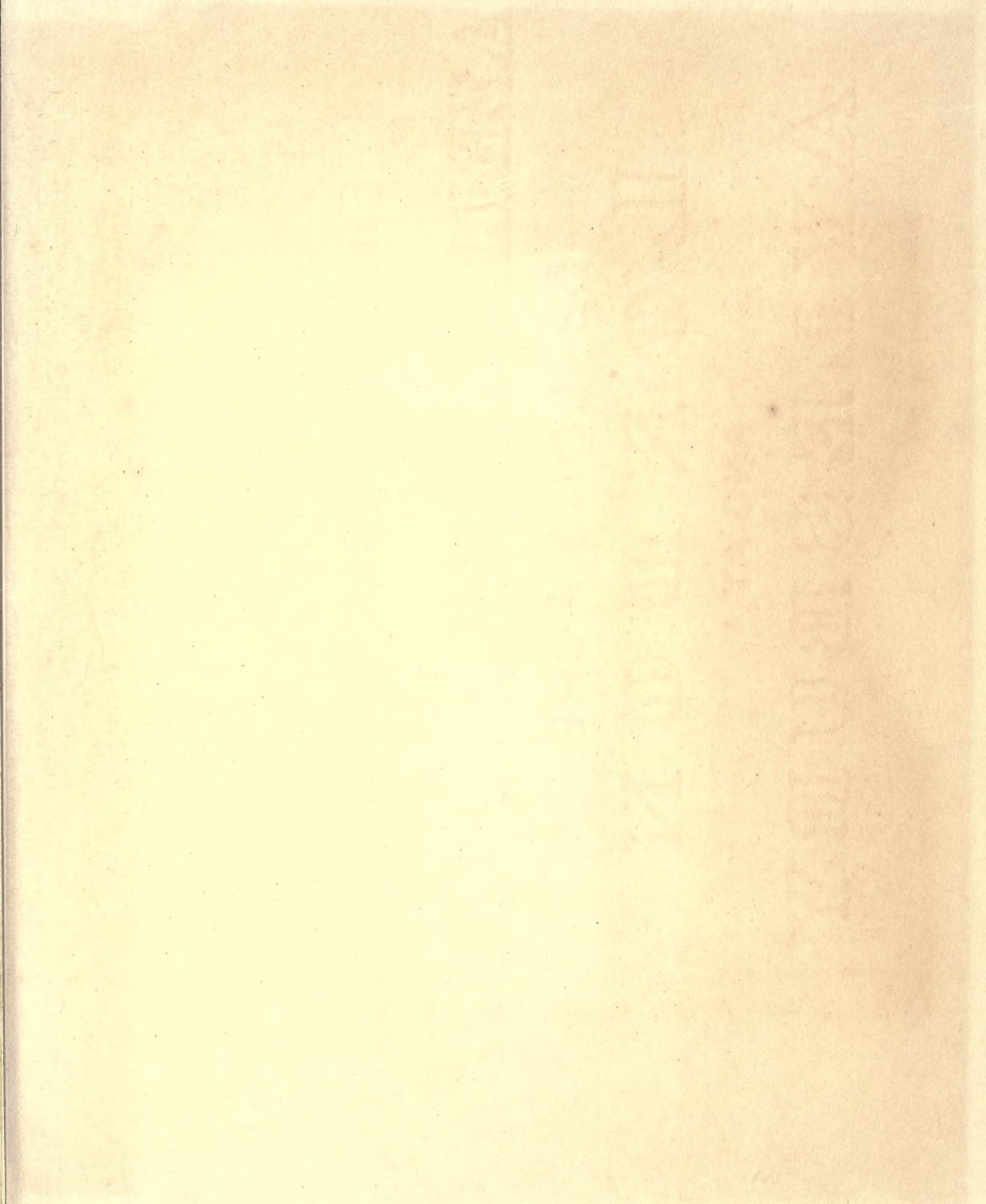


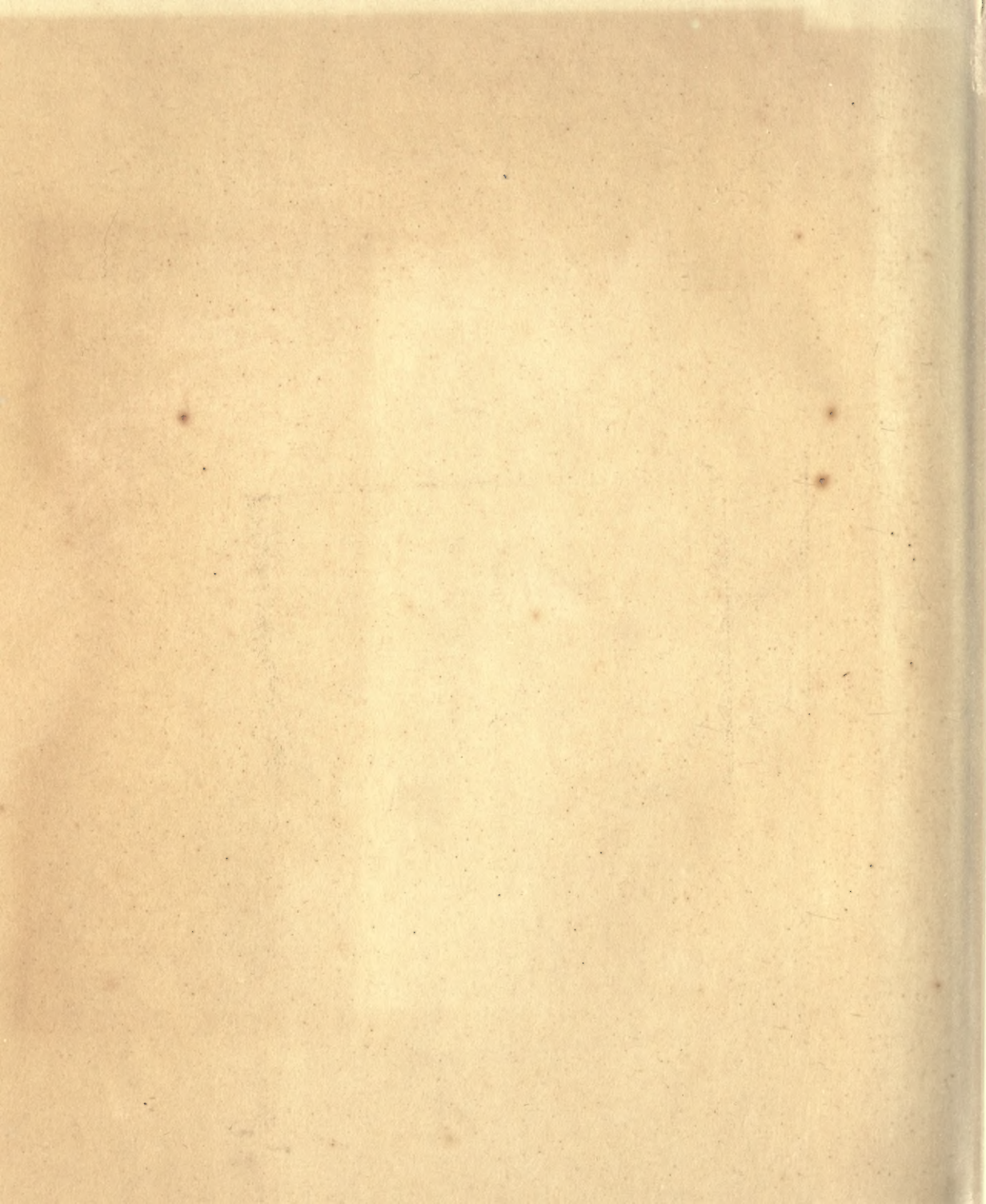
Chartered from an ill-used race of
men that cleave the soil,
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest
with enduring toil,
Storing yearly little dues of
wheat, and wine and oil;
Till they perish and they suffer—
some, 'tis whisper'd—down in hell
Suffer endless anguish, others
in Elysian valleys dwell,
Resting weary limbs at last on
beds of asphodel.
Surely, surely, slumber is more
sweet than toil, the shore
Than labour in the deep mid-ocean,
wind and wave and oar;
Oh rest ye, brother mariners, we
will not wander more.











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